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STUDIES OF SCHOOL DESEGREGATION AND ACHIEVEMENT, A SUMMARY.

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THIS REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SCHOOL DESEGREGATION AND NEGRO AND OTHER MINORITY-GROUP ACHIEVEMENT FOCUSES PRIMARILY ON SOCIAL FACTORS AFFECTING SCHOOL PERFORMANCE. THE COLEMAN AND THE U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS REPORTS AND OTHER DETAILED STUDIES OF DESEGREGATED EDUCATION ARE SUMMARIZED. IT IS CONCLUDED THAT THE EVIDENCE IS OVERWHELMING THAT, IN NORTHERN URBAN AREAS PARTICULARLY, MORE THAN TOKEN SCHOOL INTEGRATION RESULTS IN CLEAR-CUT IMPROVEMENT IN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF NEGROES AND IMPROVES THEIR SOCIAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE IN THESE STUDIES TO SHOW THAT THE PERFORMANCE OF WHITE STUDENTS IS ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY INTEGRATION. ALSO, RACIAL SEGREGATION IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN SOCIAL CLASS SEGREGATION IN DEPRESSING NEGRO EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT, AND NEGRO CHILDREN SUFFER SERIOUS HARM FROM RACIALLY SEGREGATED PUBLIC EDUCATION. SEVERAL STUDIES QUESTION THE VALUE OF COMPENSATORY EDUCATION PROGRAMS AT THEIR PRESENT LEVEL OF FUNDING. A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY IS INCLUDED. (NH)

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STUDIES OF SCHOOL DESEGREGATION AND ACHIEVEMENT:

A SUMMARY

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FOREWORD

The Commission on Human Relations is pleased to publish this timely document, "Studies of School Desegregation and Achievement: A Summary." The report is the result of a careful, up-to-date search and evaluation of the relevant scholarly literature on the relationship between school desegregation and school achievement.

Dr. Morris I. Berkowitz prepared this report in his capacity as Consultant to the Office of Research of the Pittsburgh Board of Public Education. The study was requested and supported by the Board, and formally submitted to them in March 1967.

Dr. Berkowitz serves on the faculty of the Department of Sociology of the University of Pittsburgh, where his teaching specialties include social research methodology. He is presently on leave of absence from the University to serve as Lecturer in Sociology at a university in the British Crown Colony of Hong Kong.

The Commission on Human Relations is happy to publish this study as a community service, in accordance with its mandate to "conduct educational and other programs to promote the equal rights and opportunities of all persons" and to "issue publications and reports of investigation and research in the field of human relations." The Commission believes that the publication of this factual and authoritative document can make a useful contribution to the current discussion of how and when to desegregate the public schools of Pittsburgh.

David B. Washington
Executive Director

May 1967

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Studies of School Desegregation and Achievement: A Summary

I. Assumptions of This Paper

The problems of the under-achievement of Negro and other minority group children in the public schools of the United States are too well known to demand further documentation. Two recent studies, Coleman (8) and the United States Commission on Civil Rights (52), are only the last of a convincing series of documents. Many variables have been offered as explanations for this phenomenon. At least one of these is no longer tenable and is discounted in this paper: the explanation of these differentials on the basis of inherent intellectual inferiority of Negroes. The brilliant data analysis of Pettigrew (42) is thoroughly convincing on this score, as is the work of Klineberg (31) and the statement of 18 prominent social scientists as reported in the Research Reports of the Anti-Defamation League (37). The position taken in this paper is substantially the same as that taken in Klineberg when he says:

I can only conclude that there is no scientifically acceptable evidence for the view that ethnic groups differ in innate abilities. This is not the same as saying that there are no ethnic differences in such abilities (31, p. 202).

The inference from the above must be that the causes of Negro inferiority in school performance must be sought in other variable clusters. Those that have been examined in some depth have been the social, the psychological, and the organic, particularly health and nourishment in the last instance. This paper will explore primarily the social factors rather than the other two, although some mention will be made of the psychological.

Note: Numbers in parentheses refer to numbered items in the bibliography appended to this document.

The second major assumption of this paper is that data drawn from places other than northern urban areas must be looked at suspiciously, in terms of their relevance for Pittsburgh. Data from the American South are particularly unlikely to have much relevance to the Urban North. This is true, of course, because of the differences in cultural traditions between areas of the country, as well as the differences in the numbers of Negroes in the public schools in rural and urban areas in the North.

II. Results of National Survey Research Studies

In the past two years, two major research studies have been published whose major focus has been on equalizing educational opportunities for Negroes and other minority group members. The first of these, published in August 1966, was sponsored by the U. S. Office of Education and done under the direction of James S. Coleman, and is hereafter referred to as the Coleman Report (8). The second was done by the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights and released in February of 1967 (52).

The Coleman Report, entitled Equality of Educational Opportunity, surveys 600,000 students attending 4,000 schools and also reports on the characteristics of the teachers and principals of those schools. Students studied were in grades 1, 3, 6, 9, and 12.

In addition to documenting the huge amount of racial segregation in the schools, the report also finds that schools for minority group children are slightly (but not impressively) inferior in terms of facilities (laboratories and libraries) and teachers (in terms of verbal facility tests). Coleman concludes that "differences between schools account for only a small fraction of differences in pupil achievement" (8, p. 22). Coleman then points out that the variables

which seem to matter in the outcome of education are:

1. The peer group culture--that is, the interest of students in the school in achieving within the school environment.
2. The social class composition of the school has an important effect on achievement: Negroes do far better in schools where there is a broad spectrum of socio-economic background represented.
3. Good teachers have a far greater impact on poor students than they do on wealthy students, and this seems to be particularly so for Negroes.
4. The self-image of the student is important in his school achievement: where he feels himself to be in control of his own future and has a sense of self-worth, educational achievement improves.

Overall, however, this is a disappointing report. It concerns itself primarily with first-order data tabulations and does surprisingly little with more sophisticated analytic tools, such as multivariate analysis. With the total investment required to assemble 600,000 cases, it seems justified to be concerned with the lack of further depth analysis. The best review of the Coleman Report is contained in the Newsletter of the National Committee for Support of the Public Schools.(45).

The Civil Rights Commission Report, entitled Racial Isolation in the Public Schools, remedies the problems of the Coleman Report because, not only does it contain a wealth of new materials, but it is essentially a re-analysis of the Coleman data. In fact, this is a scientifically elegant report--the data analysis seems faultless, the marshalling of earlier work is substantial and impressive, and the synthesis of the materials is handsomely done. It makes more out of data than almost all other work in this field and will be reviewed carefully here.

In Chapter 1, the Civil Rights Commission Report documents once again the extent of racial isolation in the schools and tries to show the context in

which this has occurred. During the course of this discussion they document with tabular materials (many of them inconveniently contained in Volume 2, the appendix to the report) that attendance at school does nothing to close the educational gap between Negroes and whites, but indeed, as school goes on, the gap tends to widen; that is, there is a smaller difference between Negroes and whites in the third grade than in the sixth (52, p. 14). Chapter 2 examines the causes of racial isolation in some detail, and on pages 84ff. documents again the importance of the social class of origin of the students and the nature of their peer groups as the single most important factor in school success. They do not conclude the argument here, however, and through some clever data manipulation demonstrate two very important findings:

1. In an attempt to isolate race and social class, they examine integrated schools where the attendees have low socio-economic status. In these schools Negro achievement is at a full grade level higher than it is in low socio-economic level segregated schools;
2. When schools are integrated with low socio-economic status (SES) Negroes and higher socio-economic status whites, Negro achievement averages two grade levels better than in segregated schools (52, p. 89ff).

This is an important finding in that it is extremely difficult in most studies to disentangle race and class, particularly since most Negroes are lower class, and, as the Coleman study indicates, 40 per cent of all middle class Negroes go to private schools. These findings indicate quite clearly that in schools with high concentrations of low SES Negro students (as opposed to integrated schools which are still low in SES), the important variable is segregation and not social class.

This finding is followed on page 97 with another analysis which reveals that for Negro students to succeed the presence of both good teachers and high SES students is necessary, but being in schools where a majority of the students are

white is more important than teacher quality. A careful analysis (pp. 102-103) clearly shows that these results do not come about because of the selectivity of Negro students who find themselves in these situations.

Continuing on page 107, it is shown that the length of time in segregated surroundings is bound to have a profound effect. The longer the Negro student spends in segregated situations, the further behind he falls; the longer he spends in integrated situations, the greater improvement he shows.

It (a figure) shows a consistent trend toward higher academic performance for Negro students the longer they are in school with whites. By contrast there is a growing deficit for Negroes who remain in racially isolated schools. The trend in most cases is maintained whatever the students' family background or the social class level of their classmates (52, pp., 107-108).

Further data (not taken from the Coleman study) reveal that the differences do not end with the end of school. Negro children with equivalent educational years completed get better jobs and higher incomes if they come from integrated schools rather than segregated schools (52, pp. 108-109).

The report then analyzes compensatory education programs and compares the results of these programs with desegregation. It analyzes four of these programs, including the Higher Horizons Program in New York, the Philadelphia program, and the Banneker program in St. Louis. In all cases the report finds negligible, if any, impact of compensatory education programs on students' achievement. Unfortunately it does not review findings about student morale, self-image, etc. The report also shows that the Higher Horizons Program was based upon a successful program in New York called the Demonstration Guidance Program, as reported in Wrightstone (60) and by the Board of Education (4). This is an interesting paradox in that the demonstration project worked and the massive project did not. Unnoticed by the Civil Rights Commission Report is that in the demonstration study the students went from a segregated grade school to an

integrated high school, while in the Higher Horizon Program the vast majority of children went from segregated grade schools to segregated high schools.

The Banneker program is reported to have had initial success in raising achievement levels in segregated schools (for the first six months), but after that the gains were lost and the program failed to produce any gains in achievement at all. This evidence is reviewed on pages 124-127. All of these programs were in the range of an extra investment in each student of \$20-\$60 per year.

On pages 128ff., the Report reviews some school systems in which there has been simultaneous use of both integration (usually through busing) and compensatory education in the segregated schools. The findings are:

1. In Syracuse, New York, bused students doubled the rates of achievement of students participating in compensatory education programs.
2. In Berkeley, California, bused students were compared to students with compensatory programs (the bused students were in more crowded classrooms). With no special programs, the bused students did better.
3. In Seattle, Washington, the same results as in 2 were observed.
4. In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the "Educational Improvement Plan" produced no measureable improvement in student performance, but a matched sample of children bused into integrated situations showed marked improvement in attainment.

These data are all summarized on page 140, by stating that, "...the evidence reviewed here strongly suggests that compensatory programs are not likely to succeed in racially and socially isolated school environments."

Further analysis of these data, and others, provides supporting findings which are not directly relevant to the purposes of this paper. A review of the methodology of the Civil Rights Commission Report, however, would seem appropriate.

First, the data are drawn largely from the Coleman work, reported earlier, and all of the survey reports analyzed in the Civil Rights Commission

Report are drawn from a re-analysis of those data. Although this writer has not had completely adequate time to analyze the methods used, it is apparent that they are in no sense inadequate or inappropriate to the data at hand. What is done is essentially a recombination of appropriate pieces of data in order to isolate specific and carefully defined populations, with the purpose of controlling for as many other variables as possible in the detailed analyses. This kind of analysis is the only justification for a sample of this size, in any case. The sample size allows the writers to "zero in" on small populations which would be represented by too small numbers of people in small-scale studies; for example, lower-class Negroes in integrated classes with lower-class whites, as compared to lower-class Negroes integrated with middle-class whites. This kind of procedure allows the effective isolation of race and class effects with far more success than the statistical separation on the basis of covariance analysis (for example), which only allows analysis on the basis of an arbitrary analytic model and can be difficult to interpret.

In addition to this highly sophisticated analysis, the Civil Rights Commission Report also uses data from a detailed study of students in Richmond, California, a study of recent high school graduates, and two broad-guaged surveys (done by the National Opinion Research Center of the University of Chicago) of Negro and white adults. Too little of the methodological data concerning the items is presented in the Appendix to warrant an immediate judgment as to the quality and reliability of these data. However, NORC at Chicago has a world-renowned reputation and its results must be accepted at face value. The other studies were done by reputable scholars and should be accepted pending further knowledge of the techniques used and analytic work done.

In addition to the four data components, the Civil Rights Commission

volume is informed by a thorough and systematic literature review and synthesis. This serves to give a dimension of case study knowledge to the Report and enriches it. All told it is an excellent example of scholarly work and should be highly recommended reading for anyone actively involved in working with the public schools: indeed, it completely supercedes previously available materials, including the Coleman Report.

III. Detailed Studies of Desegregated Education

With all its completeness, the Civil Rights Commission Report does not cover all of the available literature regarding the impact of desegregation. Nor will this report, but we will add several more important studies, mostly of the case study type, to the already reviewed materials. This work was much aided by two earlier articles, one by Katz, presented in 1964 (29) and the other by Weinberg, 1965 (54). The Katz review concentrates primarily on psychological aspects of desegregation, using such categories as "threat, social facilitation, competition," and the like. Katz also uses materials drawn largely from southern schools which reveal many more problem areas in desegregation than does the Civil Rights Commission Report. The sample for the latter report was weighted heavily from the northeastern United States. Katz presents findings from North Carolina, Nashville, Tennessee, and other southern locations as well as laboratory work with both animals and people. On the basis of the evidence available to him, he concludes:

1. Standards of Negro schools should be raised so that integrated students will have a better chance of success.
2. Parents should be brought into school programs and their aid enlisted.
3. Integrated schools need in-service training for teachers.

4. Ability grouping within schools should be abandoned or seriously modified because it tends to "freeze teachers' expectations as well as children's own self-images."
5. Desegregation should proceed from the lowest grades to the highest to optimize chances of success (29, p. 397).

Because of the heavy weighting in this review of southern studies, generalization to northern urban environments would be dangerous and unwarranted. In any case, even on the basis of this evidence, Katz is unable to reach a conclusion about an absolute effect of desegregation on achievement (29, p. 396).

The Weinberg review encompasses a far wider range of data than does that of Katz, and is far more concerned with data on achievement than with theoretical materials on the impact of personality on desegregation. It is, as a result, more pertinent to our inquiry. Weinberg finds the data convincing enough to boldly state, "We now know that children in non-segregated schools learn more than (other or the same) children in segregated schools" (54, p. 27). His enthusiasm was, in this author's judgment, premature in 1965. Following the Civil Rights Commission Report, it may now be justified. We will now briefly review some of the evidence used by both Weinberg and Katz, as well as some additional work.

Goldblatt and Tyson (18) found that, in a school desegregated for one school year in New York City, "both Negro and Puerto Rican students were more expressive in classes in which they were a minority than a majority. White non-Puerto Ricans showed an opposite tendency."

In New Rochelle, New York, a group of Negro students transferred to non-segregated schools were matched with a non-transferred group, and their reading test scores compared. The transferred students achieved substantially higher scores (59).

In Chicago, Hauser found that among sixth-grade students in 1963, scores on the word knowledge section of the Metropolitan Achievement Test were higher in

integrated schools than in Negro schools, but not as high as in white schools. The results also varied by social class, as shown in the following table reproduced from Weinberg (54).

Race, Class and Achievement in Chicago Schools, 1963*

Neighborhood	White School	Integrated School	Negro School
High Education Status	6.0	5.0	5.0
Middle Education Status	5.5	4.5	4.0
Low Education Status	5.0	4.0	3.0

Lesser, et al., in a massive study in New York City (covering 5 years and 400 students) found that "children in more integrated schools and neighborhoods showed significantly superior achievement with respect to verbal ability, reasoning, numerical ability, and space conceptualization." He went on to say, in conclusion, "When children attend racially-imbalanced schools, their measured mental abilities are significantly inferior to the abilities of children who attend racially-balanced schools" (33).

Samuels, as reported in dissertation abstracts, discovered that Negro students are ahead in Negro schools during grades 1 and 2, and that one year of desegregation does not close the gap. In the second year, desegregated Negroes diminished the gap between themselves and whites, and by grade 3 Negroes in desegregated schools were well ahead of their segregated age-mates (47). (Caution in interpretation is called for--it is not clear where these data were collected.)

* Social class in this table is indicated by the level of educational attainment of the parents.

In another dissertation, Negro students in Jackson, Michigan, gained an average of 6.88 points on a standard IQ test and whites gained 1.87 points after desegregation. The author cautiously attributes this to a change in the guidance system as well as to desegregation (30).

Wey restudied in 1963 some of the 70 schools he had studied in 1958 and concluded that the fears of the teachers and administrators that academic standards would have to be lowered in formerly all-white schools were not borne out. Indeed, "administrators and teachers stated over and over that they had a better institutional program now than they had before desegregation began" (57).

Eleven southern school administrators meeting in Nashville discussed academic standards after desegregation. Two claimed that desegregation had resulted in lower standards, nine said this was not the case. "All noted the initial lag of Negro students but most observed that special measures had invariably led to improvement" (51).

Hansen, looking at desegregation in the District of Columbia after five years, found both whites and Negroes doing better than they had in the previous five-year period (21, 22, 23).

Kaplan, in another study in New Rochelle, New York, found mixed results of integration. For the most part, integration improved both motivation and performance of Negroes, but a few Negroes transferred to a very wealthy white school (average income \$25,000) seemed to lose motivation and gave up trying to compete at all. Overall, although the Negro students improved, 89 per cent were in the bottom quarter of the class (28).

New York City parents were interviewed following a bus transfer from East Harlem to the Yorkville district which resulted in desegregation. The parents participated voluntarily and reported impressive improvement in conduct, attendance, interest in school, and work habits (44).

An advisory committee of the Massachusetts State Board of Education surveyed data relevant to their state and concluded:

"White and Negro children make substantial gains in achievement as a result of integration" (1, p. 4).

A final study to be reviewed is one just recently made available by the New York City schools. It concerns the outcome of an experiment in Queens Borough in which eight schools were "paired" in order to equalize racial distributions in them. Each school of a pair was assigned either the lower or higher elementary grades. The pairing took place in school year 1964-65 and the evaluation was conducted at the end of the 1965-66 school year. Substantial supplementation of services to the integrated schools was made available, including extra teachers, guidance personnel, and administrators. The total increase in cost, after initial "getting started" costs are eliminated, was 6.78 per cent (38, p. 17).

A sophisticated analysis of student accomplishment revealed that:

...the main finding concerning achievement is that pupils in all schools demonstrated an improved standing in relation to national norms at the end of the experimental period. Very frequently the improvement attained exceeded the expected gains based upon national norms (38, p. 38).

This experiment in New York is noteworthy for at least two reasons:

(1) the School Board intends to continue and expand the program due to its marked academic success, and (2) poor community preparation resulted in some unfortunate publicity and interference in the program by white parents, including the establishment of some private schools. A member of the local school board involved informed me that most of the private schools have since closed and many of the students are back in the public schools. All of the school supervisors' views mentioned in the study stress the importance of adequate community preparation (38, p. 19).

IV. Summary and Conclusions

- A. The weight of the evidence is so overwhelming that, in northern urban areas at least, school integration of more than token variety will produce a decided improvement in Negro achievement, close the educational gap between whites and Negroes, and also serve to improve the social-psychological well-being of Negroes. "All of these social-psychological considerations point to the necessity for racially-balanced education from the beginning of the formal educational process (1, p. 99)."
- B. In no study has it been shown (or even suggested) that the accomplishment of white students is in any way damaged by integration. In those few studies where it has been studied, white accomplishment either improves or does not change. The above report does not point out those places where this is found because of the uniformity of the finding. The point is made in both the Coleman Report (8) and the Civil Rights Commission Report (52), as well as others.
- C. Both the Civil Rights Commission Report and several community studies question the academic value of compensatory education programs at their present level of funding. The present evidence is sufficient to conclude that compensatory education may have positive educational value at increased levels of funding, but is not having any marked positive effect now.
- D. The evidence is very strong that racial segregation is more important than class segregation in depressing Negro educational attainment; even integration of lower socio-economic status groups improves educational attainment.
- E. "Negro children suffer serious harm when their education takes place in public schools which are racially segregated, whatever the source of such segregation" (52, p. 193).

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This is not a complete but a selected bibliography. Its contents are derived from a thorough search of the Educational Index, Sociological Abstracts, and Psychological Abstracts, all during the years 1960 to the present. An excellent three-item collection should include the Civil Rights Commission Report (52), the Weinberg review article (54), and the Katz review article (29). Good additions would be (10) and (12).

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